

Impact of Employee Engagement on Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Evidence from Indian Retail Industry

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Employee engagement indicates an employee's cognitive, emotional and behavioural state towards desired organizational outcomes. Organizational citizenship behavior is the pro-social behavior of an employee which is discretionary and not part of the organization that affects other employees and the organization. Present study assesses the impact of employee engagement on organizational citizenship behavior. Data analyzed from 195 employees from 20 retail organizations in Kerala revealed a significant impact of employee engagement on organizational citizenship behavior. Results also established a significant difference in the two variables with respect to demographic factors like gender, age and experience. The study offers critical insights to managers in establishing prudent human resource policies and practices for facilitating optimum talent management.

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Introduction

Employee engagement is a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). It is a positive psychological condition that encourage employees to devote themselves actively in their job and organization. Employee engagement is a relatively new concept in human resource management field with its origin traced back to two to three decades only. There is an exponential growth in the field of employee engagement as more and more organizations started realizing the importance of having an engaged workforce. These organizations consider employee engagement as one of the ways to develop sustained competitive advantage. A number of studies linking employee engagement and positive organizational outcomes such as workplace productivity and performance were reported in the literature (Harter et al., 2002; Shuck & Wollard, 2010).

Organizational citizenship behavior is a new but broadly researched area in human resource management and organizational psychology literature that established relationship with various concepts in business and management domain. According to Organ et al. (2006) organizational citizenship behavior is the pro-social behavior of an individual which is discretionary and not part of the organization that affect other employees and the organization. Relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and organizational effectiveness can be evidenced from various studies in the literature (Bamel et al., 2013; Kataria et al., 2013). This has led many organizations to consider the construct as a source of competitive advantage.

Indian retail industry is witnessing dynamic changes these days with the entry of several new players both domestic and international. This industry is making vital contribution to the Indian economy by generating 8 % of employment and accounting for 10% of GDP. India is anticipating more investments in this industry and want to be the largest global destination. This is possible if we can overcome some of the problems like lack of employee commitment, job hopping, lack of ownership from the employees and customer dissatisfaction. Discretionary extra role behavior from employees is the need of the hour for maintaining sustained competitive advantage which may reduce the above mentioned problems. In this context the present study explores the predictive power of employee engagement on organizational citizenship behavior. Study also attempts to find out the differ-

ence in the two variables with respect to various demographic factors.

Employee Engagement (EE)

According to Kahn (1990) EE is a multidimensional concept since it encompasses emotional, physical and cognitive engagement of employees. Concern for peer's feelings, empathy, caring and sharing in the workplace are embodiments of emotional engagement whereas responsibility at workplace and cognizance about mission indicate the cognitive engagement of employees. Kahn (1990) defined engagement as the ability to harness an employees' personal enthusiasm in their work roles. He was one of the pioneers in the field of EE who applied it at the workplace. Various studies conducted in EE defined it as the emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization (Baumruk, 2004; Richman, 2006; Shaw, 2005).

There are evidences of two different streams of research in EE in the literature. Kahn (1990) during his study about the psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work found meaningfulness, safety and availability as the important domains of engagement. He opined that engagement/disengagement of employees occurs depending on the degree of attainment or favorableness of these three constructs. May et al (2004) replicated the same study and found that the three dimensions were significantly related to engagement. The other stream of research in EE evolved from the burnout literature. Researchers who did extensive studies on

burnout defines engagement as the antithesis of burnout. Notable among them were (Maslach et al., 2001) and (Gonzalez-Roma et al., 2006). According to Maslach et al. (2001) the dimensions of engagement such as energy, involvement and efficacy can be considered as the contrasting dimensions of burnout such as exhaustion, cynicism and inefficiency. They prescribed six areas of work life such as workload, control, rewards and recognition, community and social support, perceived fairness and values which could lead to burnout and engagement.

Researchers who did extensive studies on burnout defines engagement as the antithesis of burnout.

The two streams of research in EE explains about the antecedents and psychological conditions of engagement thoroughly. Despite this there were only scant evidences about why individuals will respond to these conditions with varying degrees of engagement. This lacunae was addressed by social exchange theory. According to social exchange theory, commitments are developed after a series of interactions between the parties who accept certain rules of exchange. This mandates action and elicitation of reaction by the parties. In the organizational setting this means the obligation towards the organization for the receipt of monetary and non-monetary resources by the employees from the organization. So, there is a two-way relationship between employer and em-

ployee as per social exchange theory. This viewpoint is in consonance with Robinson et al.'s (2004) description of engagement as a two-way relationship between the employer and employee. Employees exhibit different levels of engagement to reciprocate the varying levels of resources they receive from the organization. Thus, social exchange theory provides a rationale for employees showing engagement/disengagement in their job.

EE is related to but different from other important constructs in organizational behavior such as organizational commitment and job involvement. Organizational commitment denotes the strength of an employee's involvement in and identification with the organization whereas engagement is about the attentiveness and absorption in the performance of their roles by employees. Job involvement happens when employees have a positive attitude about the need satisfying abilities of the job. Engagement on the other hand reflects how employees employ themselves in the performance of their job. The relatedness between the three constructs is that engagement can be considered as an antecedent to job involvement and organizational commitment. This was established by May et al. (2004) in their study.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

OCB became popular after Organ (1988) first coined the term and defined it an individual's voluntary behavior which cumulatively helps in the organizational

functioning, but is not explicitly or directly acknowledged by the formal reward system. This is not at all part of the formal job description. This voluntary behavior ranges from caring and helping other employees, taking care of the organization's possessions, arriving early and leaving late to spreading positivity in the organization. According to Borman & Motowidlo (1993) OCB was contextual and they coined the term citizenship performance. They opined that even though citizenship performance is not directly linked to the main job tasks, they can serve as a catalyst for the attainment of job tasks. In the same vein scholars used different terms for OCB, for instance Dyne et al. (1995) used the term extra role behavior; Brief & Motowidlo (1986) used pro social behavior; George & Brief (1992) phrased the word organizational spontaneity; Morisson (1994) viewed it as in-role and opined that employees who thought it to be in-role exhibited more of it. Motowidlo (1997) used the term contextual performance. Among these different terms, OCB is highly popular and comprehensive for explaining the voluntary, non-obligatory and discretionary extra role activities in the organization.

The important dimensions of OCB highlighted in literature are courtesy, sportsmanship, civic virtue, altruism and generalized compliance (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Podsakoff et al. 2000). Employees showing courtesy always consider one's personal actions on colleagues. This entails acting proactively to avoid causing hardships to others. Employees displaying sportsmanship ab-

stain from actions that negatively affect co-workers and the organization. Such persons are resistant to gossiping and can tolerate inconveniences to certain degree. The dimension civic virtue is concerned with organizational policies and involvement in significant issues of organization. This involvement in governance and activities offers many benefits to the organization. Those who help co-workers selflessly without any expected return are engaging in altruistic behavior. Fifth dimension is general compliance or conscientiousness which indicates concern about the time and focus on the task in hand.

An attempt was made by Williams and Anderson (1991) to group the different dimensions suggested by Bateman & Organ (1983) into individual directed (OCB-I) and organization directed behavior (OCB-O). In this grouping, altruism and courtesy falls under OCB-I and other three dimensions under OCB-O. OCB-I has a direct impact on individuals and indirectly contributes to the organization. On the other hand, OCB-O is directly beneficial to the organization. A classification on the basis of the nature of the OCB was made by Shaheen et al. (2016). They concluded that OCB can be classified into compliance behavior which was represented by sportsmanship and conscientiousness and helping behavior represented by altruism.

Many researchers found the influence of OCB on individual development and organizational performance (Dunlop & Lee, 2004). Van Dyne & LePine (1998) posited OCB as discretionary ex-

Benefits to the organization as a result of OCB are curbing of absenteeism, employee satisfaction and retention.

tra role behavior that goes beyond existing role expectations and offers many benefits to the organization. The influence of OCB on organizational effectiveness was also established by Podsakoff & Mackenzie (1997). Benefits to the organization as a result of OCB are curbing of absenteeism, employee satisfaction and retention (Khalid & Ali, 2005; Chughtai & Zafar, 2006; Chahal & Mehta, 2010).

Relationship between EE&OCB

Extant literature highlights a number of studies showing the relationship between EE and OCB (Avey et al., 2008; Christian et al., 2011). George & Joseph (2015) explored the relationship between the two variables in travel organizations and found that engagement positively impacts OCB. In the same vein studies by Rurkkhum & Bartlett (2012); Runhaar et al. (2013) and Wickramasinghe & Perera, (2014) also established relationship between the two variables. These studies are mostly conducted in the manufacturing, construction, consultancy and education industries in the developed countries. Studies about the relationship between EE and OCB is sparse in the Indian context especially in retail industry. Considering the swift changes in the employment relationships and dynamism of management practices, it is imperative to confirm the relationship between

the two variables. Therefore, an attempt has been made to investigate the relationship between the two variables. This study is important for a country like India where retail industry is witnessing acute mushrooming of organizations, skills shortage and cutthroat competition. Thus, the first hypothesis of the study is:

H1: EE positively impacts OCB

Demographic Variables & EE

Studies about different demographic variables such as gender, age, experience, designation and EE were scant in the literature and the results revealed many inconsistencies. For example, Avey et al. (2007) in their study found that female employees experience higher engagement compared to male employees. However, when Ariani (2013) conducted a study to find out the gender-based difference in EE, he found no difference between male and female employees. Such inconsistencies can be seen in the literature as of Schaufeli et al. (2006) and Sprang et al. (2007) who opined that female employees may have low levels of engagement compared to male counterparts as they experience burnout easily. This was contradicted by Yildirim (2008) as he established no difference in engagement between male and female employees. Considering these inconsistencies and scarcity in the literature about gender and EE it was decided to study gender-based difference in EE. Thus, H2 is the following:

H2: There is no significant difference in EE between male and female employees.

Scholars studied about the difference in EE with respect to designation of employees and presented mixed results. For instance, Schaufeli et al. (2006) established that engagement levels of blue-collar workers were low compared to managers thus suggesting a significant difference between designations. However, Buhler (2006) in his study found no difference in engagement levels on the basis of cadre or designation. In view of these opposing viewpoints, it is proposed to study the difference in EE between managerial and non-managerial employees of retail industry. Thus, the third hypothesis is as follows:

H3: There is no significant difference in EE between managerial and non-managerial employees.

With respect to other demographic variables like age, experience and its association with EE, a few studies were reported in the literature. James et al. (2011) in their study found that older employees experience high level of engagement compared to the younger employees. Interestingly Simpson (2009) in his study found no difference in EE with respect to age. Same inconsistencies can be seen with experience of employees also. For instance, Buhler (2006) reported no significant difference in EE among employees having different years of experience. The same was negated by Yildirim (2008) in his study by establishing a significant difference according to work experience. It was decided to analyze the difference in EE with respect to age and experience of employees in retail industry in Kerala. Thus, H4 is as follows:

H4: There is no significant difference in EE with respect to age and experience of employees.

Demographic Variables & OCB

Literature about OCB also highlights the studies about impact of demographic variables on the concept. But the studies were limited especially in the Indian context and contradictory results were also presented. For instance, Dieffendorff et al. (2002) found difference in the level of OCB between male and female employees but contradictory results were obtained by Suwannawej (2006). With respect to designation and OCB, a significant difference in OCB was established by Wanxian and Weiwu (2006) in their study conducted in China, but the same was contradicted by Gunavathy and Indumathi (2010) by establishing no difference in OCB with respect to designations. These contradictions necessitate further studies on OCB with respect to gender and designations. Therefore, H5 and H6 are as follows:

H5: There is no significant difference in OCB between male and female employees.

H6: There is no significant difference in OCB between managerial and non-managerial employees.

Contradictory results are also there in OCB literature with respect to other demographic variables like age and experience. Van Dyne et al. (1994) suggested that as employees become old they will exhibit more OCB compared to their younger counterpart. This was ne-

gated by Suwannawej (2006) whereby he established no significant difference with regard to demographics. Similarly, Gunavathy and Indumathi (2010) found no significant difference in OCB with respect to experience but Mearaj (2010) posited that experienced employees will exhibit more OCB. These inconsistencies call for more studies in OCB with different employees and in different contexts. Therefore, H7 is as follows:

H7: There is no significant difference in OCB with respect to age and experience of employees.

Participants

Participants included 195 employees working in various retail organizations in Kerala. Among the sample, 103 were males and 92 were females. Of these 128 were married and 67 were unmarried. 24.1 % of respondents belong to the age group 20-30, 24.6 % belongs to 31-40, 25.6 % belongs to 41-50 age group and the remaining 25.6% were above 50 years. With respect to the experience of the respondents, 32.3 % have work experience of 0-5 years, 27.2 % have 6-10 years, 19 % have 11-15 years and 21.5% have more than 15 years of work experience. With regard to the cadre of respondents, 109 belong to the managerial cadre and 86 were non-managerial employees.

Procedure

A two-stage sampling technique was adopted for the collection of data. Simple random sampling was used to select the

retail organizations from southern, central and northern regions of Kerala that served the population setting. 195 employees working in 20 organizations were selected from the muster rolls of the organizations by using simple random sampling technique. Ten employees were randomly selected from each of the 20 organizations by using lottery method for administering the questionnaire. Among these, 5 questionnaires were discarded because of incomplete information and arrived at a sample size of 195. The study was conducted during January- May 2019.

Measures

Two structured questionnaires were used for the study. The sections of the questionnaire are as follows:

Employee Engagement: In the present study, EE was measured by using Utrecht Work Enthusiasm Scale developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). This instrument which has seventeen statements to measure the EE is still popular and widely used in empirical research. Sample items in the scale include "At my work, I feel bursting with energy.", "I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose". Participants indicated their response on a six-point scale with anchors (1) never to (6) always.

Organizational citizenship behavior was assessed by using the scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002). The questionnaire consists of sixteen statements on a seven-point scale. The typical statements from the scale include "Attend

functions that are not required but that help organizational image.”, “Give up time to help others who have work or non-work problems” The scale was anchored by 1 (never) and 7 (always). A higher score in the scale is the representation of more organizational citizenship behavior.

Reliability of the Tool

A pilot study was conducted to test the reliability of the questionnaires. A sample of 50 respondents were selected for the pilot study. Both the questionnaires’ Cronbach’s alpha value were

found to be greater than 0.7 (EE: 0.904, OCB: 0.910). Thus, reliability of the tool was tested and found to be good.

Results and Discussion

The frequency distribution (mean and standard deviation) pertaining to the two variables are presented in Table 1

In order to test the hypothesis for the impact of EE on OCB, correlation and simple linear regression were conducted. The results are presented in Tables 2 and 3

Table 1 Mean Standard Deviation of the Variables

	Employee Engagement	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
Mean	4.90	5.55
Standard deviation	0.8615	0.9693

Source: Primary data

Table 2 Correlation between the Variables Studied

	Employee Engagement	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
Employee engagement	1	0.801(**)
Organizational citizenship behaviour	0.801(**)	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. Source: Primary data

It was found that significant correlation exists at 0.01 level between EE and OCB.

It was found that significant correlation exists at 0.01 level between EE and OCB (0.801) providing full support for the first hypothesis. There is a perfect positive correlation between the two variables which indicate that if an organization is able to keep its employees en-

gaged then they will exhibit OCB in the organization. Earlier studies by Gupta et al. (2017); Rurkkhum (2013) and Saks (2006) proved a significant relationship between EE and OCB. Engaged employees are more attentive and mentally absorbed in their work and may also develop a deep emotional connection with their workplace. This encourages them to exhibit a high level of OCB which is purely discretionary.

A significant regression equation was found ($F(1,193) = 346.390, p < 0.001$), with an R^2 of .642. That is 64.2 % of OCB can be predicted by EE. The regression analysis revealed positive re-

gression between EE and OCB. EE was found to be statistically significant in predicting OCB ($\beta = 0.801, sig < 0.05$). Results are presented in Table 3

Table 3 Linear Regression Analysis between EE & OCB

Model	Unstandardized coefficients B	Standard error	Standardized coefficients Beta	t-value	Sig	R ² value	F value	Df
Constant	1.129	0.241		4.685	.000	0.642	346.39	1
Employee Engagement	0.902	0.048	0.801	18.612	.000			

Dependent variable: organizational citizenship behavior, Source: Primary data

Moreover, as a result of regression analysis, it is possible to predict the OCB by the equation as follows:

$$OCB = 1.129 + 0.902 (EE)$$

Thus, for each one unit increase of EE, OCB increases by 0.902. These results also provide support for H1. Result of this study was in resonance with some of the earlier studies reported in the literature. The study by Mogotsi et al. (2011) found that EE can predict 76% of variance in OCB. Barua and Borah (2017) established that 41.7% variance in OCB is due to EE. Similarly, Kataria

et al., (2012); Podsakoff et al. (2000) also reported predicting behavior of EE on OCB. Through the present finding, importance of keeping employees engaged is reiterated as it encourages employees to exhibit OCB. OCB which is extra discretionary role that employees exhibit is also required along with task performance for the creation and maintenance of sustained competitive advantage.

Gender Difference in EE

To test H2, independent t test was used. Table 4 presents the t-value of the respondents based on gender.

Table 4 EE Data and t Value of Responses Based on Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value
Employee engagement	Male	103	5.08	0.630	3.124**
	Female	92	4.70	1.030	

** Significant at 0.05 level Source: Primary data

The study established that there is a significant difference between male and female respondents with respect to EE. This was in perfect resonance with some of the

earlier studies by Rothbard (2001); Johnson (2004); Shukla et al. (2015) and Vijay Anand et al. (2016). Present result rejects H2. It may also be noted that in the study

Male employees reported higher engagement compared to female employees.

male employees reported higher engagement compared to female employees. This may be because men are career driven and seek more accomplishment and growth. Compared to female employees, male em-

ployees are ambitious and achievement oriented which encourage them to utilize the opportunities provided by organizations.

Difference in EE with Respect to Designation

Independent t test was used to examine H3. The results are presented in Table 5

Table 5 EE Data & t Value of Responses Based on Designation

	Designation	N	Mean	StandardDeviation	t value
Employee Engagement	Managerial level	109	4.92	0.906	0.307*
	Non-managerial level	86	4.88	0.806	

*Not significant. Source: Primary data

Results indicate that there is no significant difference between managerial and non-managerial employees in retail industry in Kerala with respect to EE (sig>0.05). The mean and standard deviation did not reveal any pattern, and the difference is only marginal. This result was in line with the previous studies by Buhler (2006) and Shukla et al. (2015). The present results support H3. Retail organizations in Kerala are Equal Oppor-

tunity Providers (EEO) that may be the reason for no significant difference in EE on the basis of position or cadre.

Difference in EE with Respect to Age and Experience

To test H4, one way Anova was used. The results are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6 Anova - EE and Age Group

Employee Engagement	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9.586	3	3.195	4.541	0.004**
Balance Within Groups	134.406	191	0.704		
Total	143.991	194			

** Significant at 0.05 level Source: Primary data

Table 7 Anova- EE and Experience

Employee Engagement	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.018	3	2.339	3.262	0.023**
Balance Within Groups	136.973	191	0.717		
Total	143.991	194			

** Significant at 0.05 level Source: Primary data

A significant difference was found among the employees belonging to different age groups and having different years of experience with respect to EE (sig<0.05). The results reject H4. Empirical evidences in literature to support the present finding are for instance, Mathieu and Zajac (1990) and Robinson et al. (2004). Considering the earlier studies and present results, it is felt that

there is a perception about existence of a differential HR architecture in organizations by the employees.

Gender Difference in OCB

To test H5, independent t test was used. Table 8 presents the t-value of the respondents based on gender.

Table 8 OCB: Data and t Value of Responses Based on Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Male	103	5.75	0.776	3.145**
	Female	92	5.32	1.11	

** Significant at 0.05 level Source: Primary data

There is a significant difference between male and female respondents with respect to OCB.

The study thus established that there is a significant difference between male and female respondents with respect to OCB. This was in resonance with some of the earlier studies by Ariani (2013) and

Mearaj (2010). Present result rejects H5. It may also be noted that in the study male employees exhibited higher OCB compared to female employees.

Difference in OCB with Respect to Designation

Independent t test was used to examine H6. The results are presented in

Table 9 OCB Data and t Value of Responses Based on Designation

	Designation	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t value
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Managerial level	109	5.51	1.03	-0.501*
	Non-managerial level	86	5.56	0.889	

*Not significant. Source: Primary data

Table 9

Result indicates that there is no significant difference between managerial and non-managerial employees in retail industry in Kerala with respect to OCB (Sig>0.05).

The finding of the study provides support for H6. This finding was in line with the earlier studies by Williams and Shiaw (1999) and Gunavathy and Indumathi (2010). Thus, employees in retail organizations in Kerala irrespective of position exhibit OCB. This is

Table 10 Anova- OCB and Age Group

Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	17.121	3	5.707	6.600	0.000**
Balance Within Groups	165.153	191	0.865		
Total	182.274	194			

** Significant at 0.05 level Source: Primary data

Table 11 Anova- OCB & Experience

Organizational citizenship behavior	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	9.209	3	3.070	3.388	0.019**
Balance Within Groups	173.065	191	0.906		
Total	182.274	194			

** Significant at 0.05 level Source: Primary data

because of the egalitarian attitude towards all employees by the organization.

Difference in OCB with Respect to Age & Experience

To test H7, one way Anova was used. The results are shown in Tables 10 and 11. A significant difference was found among the employees belonging to different age groups and possessing different years of experience with respect to OCB ($\text{sig} < 0.05$). The result reject H7. This finding is in line with the previous studies by scholars like Van Dyne et al. (1994) and Li and Wan (2007) (with regard to experience); Mearaj (2010) and Mayel et al. (2013) (with respect to age).

Managerial Implications

The results of the study have some managerial implications. This study established that EE is a significant predictor of OCB. Managers must consider the fact that engaged employees' exhibit high level of OCB. So, care should be taken

by the managers to keep employees engaged all the time. In the organizational setting, developing psychological belongingness through engagement is important as it fosters citizenship behavior which may culminate in organizational preference over individual preference. OCB is viewed with paramount importance and it is useful to the organization. Engaged employees are ready to commit themselves to perform extra role behavior by way of extra brain power, energy and time. In the study it was found that there is a significant difference in EE and OCB with respect to various demographic factors like gender, age and experience. Therefore, managers must understand the personal characteristics of their employees and design a differentiated HR architecture which caters to the diverse needs of employees. This should happen without diluting the egalitarian approach, but at the same time there should be some positive discrimination on the basis of performance, learning and commitment from employees. For keeping the employees engaged their

needs and aspirations must be fulfilled. Chances of engaged employees showing improved contextual performance in addition to task performance are high compared to disengaged employees.

Limitations & Future Directions

The results of this study should be considered in light of its limitations. The present study was cross sectional that may limit the extent of causality. Longitudinal studies are required to explain about the predictive power of EE on OCB in a precise manner. Another limitation of the study was with regard to the sample size. Considering the paucity of time and the busy schedule of employees as well as limited access to the organizations, data could be collected only from 195 employees working in 20 organizations which may limit the generalization of the findings. Since studies about EE and OCB are sparse in Indian context, present study can be extended to other industries like manufacturing, telecom, banking, healthcare with a large sample for more accurate generalization. Also, the moderating or mediating role of other important constructs like organizational culture, HRD practices, organizational commitment on EE and OCB should be explored. Such studies may prove beneficial to practitioners and contribute to the existing body of knowledge.

Conclusion

Results of the present study established the predictive power of EE on OCB. It was also found that there was a significant difference in EE and OCB

with respect to demographic variables like gender, age and experience. The study provides a framework of improving OCB through EE which will ultimately result in organizational effectiveness.

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